

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 566
INFO EC COLLECTIVE
USMISSION NATO
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

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USNMR SHAPE FOR POLAD
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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, NL
SUBJ: DUTCH ELECTIONS-A QUICK LOOK AT THE RESULTS

REF: THE HAGUE 2747

1. SUMMARY. DUTCH SOCIALISTS REGISTERED STRIKING GAINS IN
MAY 25 SECOND CHAMBER ELECTIONS. FAR LEFT LOST BADLY
AS LIBERALS ALSO REGISTERED GAAIN. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS HELD
EVEN BUT LOST OUT AS COUNTRY'S LARGEST PARTY. PRIME MINISTER
DEN UYL IS IN A STRONG POSITION TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT
ALTHOUGH IT PROMISES TO BE A LONG AND DIFFICULT FORMATION.
END SUMMARY:

2. ELECTION RESULTS ROLLED IN LAST NIGHT WITH A NUMBING
CONSISTENCY. FROM NORTH TO SOUTH, VILLAGE TO CITY, PRO-
TESTANT TO CATHOLIC AREAS REPETITIVELY THE STORY WAS THE
SAME--CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (CDA) HELD EVEN OR REGISTERED
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SLIGHT INCREASES, LIBERALS (VVD) AND DEMOCRATS '66 (D'66)
BOOKED RESPECTABLE GAINS, WHILE THE SOCIALISTS (PVDA) PILED
UP A WHOPPINGLY LARGE INCREASE, THE LARGEST REGISTERED BY
ANY DUTCH PARTY SINCE UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE WAS INTRODUCED IN
1918. REGARDLESS OF THEIR POLITICAL COLOR, SMALL PARTIES
WERE DECIMATED.

3. A QUICK ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS REVEALS THAT THE TREND TOWARD THREE-PARTY POLITICS CONTINUES, THE CDA HAS CAUSE TO WORRY OVER THE LONG TERM, THE SHIFT TO THE RIGHT DEMONSTRATED IN OTHER NORTHERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES DURING THE PAST YEAR ALSO WAS PRESENT HERE, BUT IN A MUCH MORE MODIFIED FORM, AND JOOP DEN UYL IS THE CLASS OF THE DUTCH FIELD.

4. BY WINNING 33.8 PERCENT OF THE VOTE AND AN APPARENT 53 SEATS IN THE 150 MEMBER SECOND CHAMBER (THE LARGEST NUMBER EVER TALLIED BY A DUTCH PARTY) JOOP DEN UYL'S SOCIALISTS ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES NOT ONLY AS THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST, BUT AS ITS MOST VIBRANT AND POWERFUL PARTY AS WELL. THE PVDA VICTORY CAME IN IMPRESSIVE STYLE. TRAILING THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS BADLY EARLY THIS YEAR, THE LABOR PARTY CAME ON LIKE GANGBUSTERS TO WIN 10 NEW SEATS. IN CITY AFTER CITY THE RESULTS FOR THE PVDA WERE SIMILAR--ROTTERDAM 55.4 PERCENT, UP 9.8 PERCENT OVER 1972; AMSTERDAM 44.2 PERCENT COMPARED TO 33.2 IN 1972; THE HAGUE 37.4 PERCENT UP NEARLY 6 PERCENT; UTRECHT 40.1 PERCENT, AT 9 PERCENT GAIN. TAKING IT TO THE CDA EVEN ON ITS HOME TURF IN THE SOUTH, THE PVDA WON IN CITY AFTER CITY. ONLY BY HOLDING ON IN SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS DID THE CDA MANAGE TO KEEP IT CLOSE.

5. WHILE MOST POLITICIANS RIGHTLY GIVE CREDIT TO DEN UYL FOR PULLING THE BIG VOTE, THE SOCIALISTS HELD A NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL TRUMPS. THE PVDA MAINTAINS A FIRST-RATE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION THROUGHOUT THE NETHERLANDS. IT HAS THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST YOUNG POLITICIANS TO PUT BEFORE VOTERS, AND IT HAD UNCLASSIFIED

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A RECORD TO RUN ON WHICH WAS BETTER THAN ANYTHING THE OPPOSITION COULD DREAM UP (FOUR YEARS OF PROVEN PERFORMANCE AND INNOVATION DURING DIFFICULT TIMES), AND THEN DEN UYL. STANDING HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE THE CURRENT CROP OF POLITICIANS, DEN UYL CONSISTENTLY LED HIS PARTY IN POPULARITY. PUBLIC OPINION POLLS SHOWED HIM AS THE PREFERRED PRIME MINISTER FROM THE BEGINNING. AS THE CAMPAIGN CAME TO A CLOSE, EVERY LARGE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER IN THE COUNTRY CARRIED FULL PAGE CALLING ON THE VOTERS TO RE-ELECT THE MINISTER-PRESIDENT. AS NEARLY AS IS POSSIBLE UNDER THE DUTCH SYSTEM, THE PEOPLE DID JUST THAT.

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6. EACH OF THE THREE MAJOR PARTIES COULD TECHNICALLY CLAIM TO HAVE WON SINCE THEY ALL REGISTERED SOME GAIN. THE CDA, HOWEVER, WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME DOING IT WITH A STRAIGHT FACE. AN EARLY LEADER IN OPINION POLLS, A NEW PARTY WITH ALL OF THE ADVANTAGES OF NEWNESS, WELL FINANCED, AND WITH THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER LEADING THEIR LIST, THEY ENTERED THE RACE WITH HIGH HOPES. IN THE END THEY DROPPED DOWN TO ECOND PLACE. ATTEMPTING TO PUT THE BEST FACE ON WHAT ACTUALLY WILL BE SEEN AS A DEFEAT, CDA POLITICIANS LOOKED RATHER LIMP LAST NIGHT. MAYN OF THEM ARE PROBABLY HAUNTED BY THEIR DEMONSTRATED INABILITY TO HALT THE CONTINUING DECONFESSINALIZATION OF DUTCH POLITICS, A PROCESS WHICH IN THE LONG RUN COULD COST THEM HEAVILY.

7.BY WINNING SIX NEW SEATS, THE LIBERAL LEADER
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HANS WIEGEL SHOULD BE SATISFIED. HE PROBABLY IS NOT. ALTHOUGH HIS PARTY CONTINUED ITS SPECTACULAR CLIMB (IT WON 6 ADDITIONAL SEATS IN 1972, AS WELL), WIEGEL IS LIKELY DOOMED TO ANOTHER TIME IN OPPOSITION. BECAUSE OF THE ROUT OF SMALL PARTIES HE WILL FIND VERY FEW ALLIES TO JOIN HIM. HIS LONG RANGE PROSPECTS ARE GOOD, HOWEVER, SINCE THE VVD IS CLEARLY A GROWTH PARTY. IT

IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE THE VVD OVERTAKING THE CDA IN THE NEXT ELECTION.

8. EXCEPT FOR D'66 WHICH, IN THE SPACE OF A YEAR, STAGED A REMARKABLE COMEBACK FROM APPARENT OBLIVION TO ACTUALLY WIN TWO NEW SEATS FOR TOTAL OF EIGHT, AND ONE FUNDAMENTALIST PROTESTANT PARTY WHICH HELD EVEN, THE REST OF THE SMALL PARTIES TOOK A SOUND THRASHING. ON THE FAR LEFT, THE COMMUNISTS (CPN) DROPPED FROM SEVEN TO TWO, DRAWING ONLY 1.73 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. ALTHOUGH THEY WERE THOUGHT TO BE IN TROUBLE AFTER THE RECENT RAPPROCLEMENT WITH THE CPSU, THE SIZE OF THEIR DEFEAT WAS STARTLING. THE RADICALS (PPR) DID NEARLY AS POORLY, GOING FROM SEVEN TO THREE WHILE THE PACIFIST SOCIALISTS JUST BARELY MANAGED TO HANG ON TO ONE OF THEIR TWO SEATS. MOST OF THIS VOTE MOVED TO THE RIGHT AND ACCOUNTS FOR PART OF THE PVDA INCREASE. THE CENTER RIGHT PARTY DS'70, WHICH HAD WAGED A LACKLUSTER CAMPAIGN, TOOK PERHAPS THE WORST DRUBBING OF THE DAY LOSING FIVE OF ITS SIX SEATS. FARMERS AND SMALL CHURCH PARTIES ALSO FARED POORLY.

9. THE SHIFT TO THE RIGHT WHICH WAS DEMONSTRATED IN AN NUMBER OF NORTHERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (ESPECIALLY SWEDEN AND THE FRG) DURING THE PAST YEAR WAS ALSO PRESENT IN HOLLAND. DESPITE THE STRIKING VICTORY OF DEN UYL'S SOCIALISTS, ANALYSTS SHOULD NOTE THAT MUCH OF THE GAIN CAME AT THE EXPENSE OF PARTIES FARTHER TO THE LEFT. THE LIBERAL AND D'66 INCREASES UNCLASSIFIED

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ALSO POINT TO A SLIGHT MOVE TO THE RIGHT.

10. THE TWIN HOSTAGE DRAMAS AT BOVENSILDE AND ONNEN, ALTHOUGH COMPETING WITH THE ELCTIONS FOR NEWS AND TERMINATING OPENCAMPAIGNING TWO DAYS BEFORE POLLING AS WELL AS TYING DOWN THE CDA AND PVDA LIST LEADERS, SEEM TO HAVE PLAYED NO ROLE IN THE OUTCOME. VOTERS TURNED OUT ALL OVER THE COUNTRY ON A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN IMPRESSIVE NUMBERS, 87.5 PERCENT AS AGAINST 82.9 PERCENT IN THE 1972 ELECTIONS. THE OPENLY RACIST NETHERLANDS PEOPLES' UNION (NVU), WHICH MANY FEARED WOULD PROFIT FROM HOSTILITY TOWARD THE MOLUCCANS, FAILED MISERABLY AND WILL NOT HAVE A SEAT IN PARLIAMENT.

11. LEADERS OF THE NEW PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS WILL BEGIN TODAY TO ADVISE THE QUEEN ON THE RESULTS OF YESTERDAY'S ELCTIONS. ALTHOUGH EVERYONE EXPECTS AN EVENTUAL PVDA/CDA CABINET, POSSIBLY INCLUDING D'66 MINISTERS, THE PROCESS PROMISES TO BE LONG AND DIFFICULT.

SEPTELS TO FOLLOW IN NEXT NFEW DAYS WILL ATTEMPT TO
DESCRIBE WHAT ELECTIONS MEANS AND WHERE HOLLAND GOES
FROM HERE.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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